

Pauling continues research work, still holds maverick views

By Tim Goodman
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PALO ALTO — Two-time Nobel laureate Linus Carl Pauling seems frail these days, asking visitors to speak loudly and shaking ever so slightly.

But as he approaches his 88th birthday Feb. 28, his handshake is fiercely strong and his wit is still sharp and biting.

And he's still unwilling to yield an inch to his many critics, who look askance at his theory that vitamin C can not only deter the common cold but also work against cancer and AIDS and raise the IQ of mentally retarded children by up to 20 points.

Pauling's critics contend he has never proven his case, despite the research efforts of the 50 people who work at his Linus Pauling Institute of Science and Medicine in Palo Alto. The institute, which he founded in 1973, draws in an estimated \$3.5 million a year.

Pauling said he's used to the attacks and remains convinced of his ideas. "I don't think there's any statement in my books that I have to retract."

Pauling has dropped his daily intake of vitamin C from 18 grams to 12, still 200 times the government's minimum requirement. He has in the past swallowed 50 grams a day when he's felt a cold coming on.

"I don't seem to have aged much in the last 23 years," he said. "But perhaps not everyone responds so well."

"Every person interested in their health should be taking extra vitamin C — at least 1,000 milligrams. It's worth the money to get up in the 1,000 milligram range. People would be considerably more healthy."

Pauling says he can't remember the last time he had a cold. And his last major medical problem was a kidney disease at age 40, from which he has recovered.

"I'm considerably beyond the average age (of life expectancy) for males," Pauling said. But he said he won't use himself as an example.

"I know enough not to claim that," he said. "People keep pointing out to me some fellow who reached 100 and smoked and drank heavily."

Though he has converted some who were skeptical of his claim that vitamin C could battle the common cold, he has yet to convince mainstream scientists of his claims about the vitamin's effect on cancer and acquired immune deficiency syndrome.

"It's taken longer than I had imagined to convert the medical



Linus Pauling

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establishment," Pauling said. "In fact, they're still holding out. They rely on medical authorities and nutrition authorities and I contend these authorities do a pretty poor job. They're lazy and not thoughtful enough."

This same type of argument has been leveled at Pauling and both sides will continue to harangue as long as Pauling promotes his vitamin C theories, which will be until he dies.

The argument, however, tends to obscure Pauling's efforts for peace, which have been just as controversial.

In 1952, the State Department revoked his passport after Sen. Joseph McCarthy accused Pauling of anti-American views. It was reinstated two years later, after Pauling won the Nobel Prize in chemistry for his work on the nature of protein molecules.

Although he still had his feet firmly planted in science, Pauling took the time to write "No More War!" in 1958. Then he got more than 9,000 scientists from 44 countries to sign a petition denouncing open-air nuclear testing.

He had to answer for that in front of a congressional subcommittee in 1960. His petition helped promote passage of the Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which was ratified in 1962, the same year he won the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts.

He is the only person to win two unshared Nobel Prizes.

"I think that we should have a goal of working toward a world where every human being can live a good life," Pauling said.

These days, Pauling spends most of his time in Big Sur, at his home overlooking the Pacific. But he makes frequent trips to Palo Alto to check up on research. He says he's not ready to retire and, in fact, must often force himself to quit working and enjoy some leisure time.